CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An instant messaging method comprising the steps of:

selecting at least one subscriber of an instant messaging service, wherein said subscriber is in an inactive state;

designating at least one action for an instant messaging client to automatically perform;

automatically detecting that a state of said subscriber changes to an state change; and

automatically executing said designated action responsive to said detecting step.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said action is an instant messaging initiation action that initiates an instant messaging session between said client and said subscriber.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said action includes at least one action selected from the group consisting of a notification action, a prompting action, and a message conveyance action.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting, said designating, said detecting, and said executing steps are performed by said instant messaging client.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein said instant messaging client includes a Lotus Sametime (TM) type client.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting step further comprises the step of:

selecting a group, wherein said group comprises a plurality of subscribers, and wherein said plurality comprises said subscriber of claim 1.

7. The method of claim 6, further comprising the step of:

determining each subscriber in said group that is in an inactive state; and

for each subscriber in said inactive state, performing said designating, detecting, and executing steps.

8. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

designating at least one inactive state associated with said designated action, wherein said state change results from a change from the designated state to said active state.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

displaying a user selectable list of subscribers within a graphical user interface, wherein said subscribers in said list include at least one subscriber in an inactive state;

selecting said subscriber in an inactive state from said list;

displaying at least one user selectable option within said graphical user interface as a direct result of the selection of said subscriber;

receiving a single graphical user interface input; and

responsive to said single graphical user interface input, performing said designating and said monitoring steps.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:

presenting within a graphical user interface a list of subscribers, wherein said list includes at least one subscriber that is in an active state, and wherein said list includes said selected subscriber; and

within said graphical user interface, visually distinguishing said selected subscriber from other subscribers in said list.

11. A machine-readable storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

selecting at least one subscriber of an instant messaging service, wherein said

subscriber is in an inactive state;

designating at least one action for an instant messaging client to automatically perform;

automatically detecting that a state of said subscriber changes to an state change; and

automatically executing said designated action responsive to said detecting step.

12. The machine-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said action is an instant messaging initiation action that initiates an instant messaging session between said client and said subscriber.

13. The machine-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said action includes at least one action selected from the group consisting of a notification action, a prompting action, and a message conveyance action.

14. The machine-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said selecting, said designating, said detecting, and said executing steps are performed by said instant messaging client.

15. The machine-readable storage of claim 14, wherein said instant messaging client includes a Lotus Sametime (TM) type client.

16. The machine-readable storage of claim 11, wherein said selecting step further comprises the step of:

selecting a group, wherein said group comprises a plurality of subscribers, and wherein said plurality comprises said subscriber of claim 11.

17. The machine-readable storage of claim 16, further comprising the step of:

determining each subscriber in said group that is in an inactive state; and

for each subscriber in said inactive state, performing said designating, detecting, and executing steps.

18. The machine-readable storage of claim 11, further comprising the step of:

designating at least one inactive state associated with said designated action, wherein said state change results from a change from the designated state to said active state.

19. The machine-readable storage of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:

displaying a user selectable list of subscribers within a graphical user interface, wherein said subscribers in said list include at least one subscriber in an inactive state;

selecting said subscriber in an inactive state from said list;

displaying at least one user selectable option within said graphical user interface as a direct result of the selection of said subscriber;

receiving a single graphical user interface input; and

responsive to said single graphical user interface input, performing said designating and said monitoring steps.

20. The machine-readable storage of claim 11, further comprising the step of:

presenting within a graphical user interface a list of subscribers, wherein said list includes at least one subscriber that is in an active state, and wherein said list includes said selected subscriber; and

within said graphical user interface, visually distinguishing said selected subscriber from other subscribers in said list.

21. An instant messaging system comprising:

means for selecting at least one subscriber of an instant messaging service, wherein said subscriber is in an inactive state;

means for designating at least one action for an instant messaging client to automatically perform;

means for automatically detecting that a state of said subscriber changes to an state change; and

means for automatically executing said designated action responsive to said detecting step.

22. An instant messaging method comprising the steps of:

determining that a subscriber of an instant messaging system has a status of being unavailable for an instant message communication;

indicating an intension to communicate with the subscriber as soon as the subscriber becomes available;

automatically detecting a status change resulting in said subscriber being available for an instant message communication; and

automatically initiating an instant messaging session that includes said subscriber and said client responsive to said status change.

23. An instant messaging system comprising the steps of:

means for determining that a subscriber of an instant messaging system has a status of being unavailable for an instant message communication;

means for indicating an intension to communicate with the subscriber as soon as the subscriber becomes available;

means for automatically detecting a status change resulting in said subscriber being available for an instant message communication; and

means for automatically initiating an instant messaging session that includes said subscriber and said client responsive to said status change.